



There Will Be Time

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Time travel is impossible! There is no machine that can take you into time, past or future. But what if you are born a time traveler?

Jack Havig did not know how he could cross the centuries merely by willing himself to. But the fact remained, he could. And, thought Jack, if I can travel through time, there must be others!

So Jack Havig, human being extraordinaire, set out to see the world--the world of ancient Rome, of the Byzantine empire, of the American Indian tribes & ultimately the world of the future.

Seeing the future, Jack found meaning in his life and a reason for his gift. He must seek out others like himself throughout the centuries and together they must try to affect the future of humankind. For that future threatened the extinction of humanity's entire civilization...

There Will Be Time Details

Date : Published March 6th 1973 by Signet (first published September 1972)

ISBN : 9780451054012

Author : Poul Anderson

Format : Mass Market Paperback 176 pages

Genre : Science Fiction, Time Travel, Fiction

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Lyn says

Poul Anderson's 1973 novel *There Will Be Time* demonstrates brilliantly how his works can be divided into three main categories: science fiction, fantasy and time travel.

Normally, time travel books can be considered as a sub-genre of science fiction, but here, more than in the *Time Patrol* stories or in *The Corridors of Time*, Anderson shows that it is a viable medium in its own right that actually combines elements of science fiction, fantasy and historical fiction into a seamless and entertaining whole.

The author uses time travel as a vehicle to examine and explore what is best and worst in ourselves and with the understanding that societies evolve and collapse just as natural forces grow and die. Anderson was an intelligent, thoughtful observer of human nature, society, cultures and anthropology and his works are dazzling with the light of an energetic and curious modern mind.

Modern authors would also do well to consider his style as *There Will Be Time* is lean and muscular at 176 pages compared with the commercially bloated tomes of much current fiction. Anderson fans will also enjoy a brief, self-disparaging cameo in his own book. This is a very good story, one of his better books.

Ron says

“A man can do but little. Enough if that little be right.”

I've read this book before--long, long ago. Knowing the story, but having it told anew was a treat. Perhaps the height of Anderson's skill as a storyteller. A slightly different take on time travel, but aren't they all?

“Scientific information is only a glimmer on the surface of a mystery.”

Written in 1971, it grappled with the increasingly dangerous Cold War, which is remote to modern readers as World War One was to Anderson. “Try to understand your world in 1951.” Most of us have trouble imagining our world today; we don't even try to learn the past, with Santayana's forecast result.

“We need all the diversity, all the assorted ways of living and thinking, we can get. Inside of limits, true.”

His protagonist creates an instrument “built to his specification in 1980, to take advantage of the superb solid-state electronics then available.” Before you chuckle. Consider how much research and development go into integrated circuits; today (2017) it's very hard to home make electronics. Today we (you and me) lack both the infrastructure and the know how. Besides, Anderson wasn't betting the War of Judgement would hold off much longer.

“Now that history's returning to its normal climate here (North America) also, and the norm is an ice age.” In 1971 all right-thinking folks also thought the climate issue was the coming ice age. Sigh.

“Racist: a white person who, when any Black person rings a bell, fails to salivate.”

Text note: There are lots of transposed n's and h's, presumably uncorrected OCR errors.

“We made that which had once been good into an idol, and thereby allowed what good was left to rot out of it.”

Skip the “bonus” tales. They lack the quality of the main story, perhaps added to inflate the page count.

“But there are no happy endings. There are no endings of any kind. At most, we are given happy moments.”

Raj says

Jack Havig is a most unusual man. He is a man who can travel through time, without any artificial aid. At first content to just satisfy his own curiosity, he eventually discovers a great threat to Earth's future and must band together with others of his kind to save the future of civilisation.

I enjoyed this book quite a lot. The rules of time travel are quite well defined and the author uses them effectively, for example the fact that anything touching the traveller will go with him, but he can only "lift" so much with him through time, so a piece of wire attached to a wall and looped around his ankle is enough to stop him time travelling.

The story is told through a third party, Jack's family doctor and childhood friend to whom Jack returns every so often to relate the next part of his adventures, and the old sawbones is a likeable narrator and doctor of the Bones McCoy variety.

Jack's emotional trauma in Constantinople is believable and well-related, making him a very human hero. His relationship with the Eyrie is interesting and the story keeps you guessing where it's going all the way through.

A fun story of time travel, with some meat on the bones and decent characterisation.

Waxseraphim says

An interesting take on time travel. However, the inability to change anything and the vague amount of details provided about the story made it a bit uninteresting. The characters were ultimately unknowable and thus were not able to be connected with. The plot was somewhat interesting but it was overall a mediocre novel.

Landis says

"Caution: Spoilers"

uh....meh...

Plot? Aftermath? Denouement?

I was hooked on the furious action, couldn't put it down. Then...felt dumped randomly into a conclusion with no aftermath where I could catch my breath, no denouement. And maybe I'm repeating myself (denouement), but I could detect no resolution, no point, no message. Then, Deus Ex Machina: the protagonists are just swept away by space travel.

The lack of aftermath felt like a theme park thrill ride, tossing me in every direction at high speed and then...just dumping me onto a concrete floor from a height of about ten feet.

I hate deus ex machina. To me, it's like, "OK, I ran out of stuff to write so here's this "Surprise!" arbitrary conclusion from outside the plot (in this case, space travel, not time travel)."

Maybe it never occurred to me the planet and the race could survive indefinitely (that is to say, "There Will be Time"?). Maybe I had a faulty certainty one or both would end. Maybe the denouement is, the planet and the race survive our present suicidal race to the bottom. For example, perhaps, "We survive the exhaustion of fossil fuels!" "We survive our thousands of nuclear warheads!" "We survive our destruction of ecology!" "We survive the dozens of wars!" at any given moment on this rock.

To the author's credit, the 1970's "Devil's Dictionary" was clever, accurate and, for me, comic relief (unfortunately, I remember 1970).

I don't even remember why the Eyrie earned destruction in Jack's viewpoint, other than they had killed his wife. Was there a broader, less personal motive? Like, the Eyrie were a racket of murderers, rapists and thieves posing as a venerated guild of scientists using time travel to secure the future of the planet and the race?

Maybe I'm too formal. Maybe I was expecting an Aesop Fable with a moral: time travel good; time travel bad. Or, perhaps, a grand lesson: best stick around and change what you can when and where you are.

Anyway...hmmm.....

prcardi says

Storyline: 4/5

Characters: 2/5

Writing Style: 2/5

World: 4/5

What it did right: Time travel! Who would have guessed?! I surely didn't. There were two ways in which Anderson made this unexpectedly enjoyable. First, time travel was largely consistent. That is such a rarity in the subgenre. Second, he did it without long digressions or asides into hard science fiction. Anderson gave reasonable and plausible answers of, *that simply doesn't happen* or *I don't understand it myself*, whenever a paradox came up and had good, simple explanations for other quibbles. The mechanisms aren't perfect, and it was something of a magician's trick to make the system coherent. The plotholes and gaps that do exist got

shoved off into the realm of character motivations and behavior, leaving the time traveling world mostly sound. I've rarely seen the time travel elements used so effectively in storytelling and in the plot. The book was a lot of fun.

What else it did right: Jumping around locations like Anderson did could easily have come off as hokey or shallow, but one of Anderson's biggest points was a sociological and historical argument about the (in)ability of remarkably different people understanding one another. This, more than the time travel rule-building, made this a memorable and worthwhile read.

And yet another thing it did right: Rising above Cold War politics. This is very much a product of the Cold War. Prominent historical characters, events, and arguments mostly from the American perspective, provide the foundation for *There Will Be Time*. Anderson interjects some biting and blunt criticisms of both the left and the right of the political spectrum. He castigates the "progressives" of the era for a failure to see how much better a flawed America is than other options while he demonizes the "conservatives" for their refusal to use their privileged positions to elevate others. Poul Anderson was a tough-love policeman who arrested and charged everyone in the fight regardless of who started it. Most surprising, he turned the book away from politics into ecology. Perhaps more precisely, he made ecology the substance of politics.

The few weaknesses: The writing. I'd recently read Clifford Simak, another midwestern, Cold War era, science fiction author and contemporary, and Anderson's writing was inelegant and just barely functional in comparison. The characters were not so terrible (or remarkable) except that it was hard to believe any of the characters would have played their roles had the time travel system worked as indicated. This was just one of those turn-your-head-aside and don't look aspects where you willingly ignore a gaping flaw to better enjoy the story.

Lisa says

I got nearly halfway through this book and finally gave up. I couldn't stand the writing.

wally says

read this one back in february here it is the day after christmas 2014. no index. hmmmm. did read a hardcover, the book club edition, if it matters. it doesn't. four-stars. musta liked it. i liked, enjoyed the idea of traveling through time. the jaunt, as alfred bester described it, in one of his stories. others probably before and since. whereas in...was it *The Demolished Man* or *The Stars My Destination*...or maybe boff? anyway, whereas in one of those stories...the character capable of *jaunting*...that king popularized in his short story of the same name..."the jaunt" was it?...in those, the travel is from point a to point b in the same time...this one involves time. i wish i could remember more about the story but with the hard=cover on the countertop before me...i'm at a loss. koontz, too, used the same idea in one of more of his stories...Dragon TearsOne Door Away from Heaven ?

for sure in either or both *Fear Nothing*
Fear Nothing
Seize the Night...so...if nothing else, perhaps the bread crumbs will find an appeal.

Tony says

My grade = 95% A

This is one of my perennial favorites that I know I've read way more than a dozen times. According to my records, I last read it in 2004 and then decided that, as I was getting older, it was time to stop rereading my favorites and move on to all the books I haven't read.

So on Friday night I finished my second Louise Penny novel, picked up the newest Rick Riordan, House of Hades, headed upstairs, and had the urge to pull out this one again.

Basically, it's about certain individuals' ability to move through time at will. It reminds me very much of Stephen Gould's Jumper, except that book was about moving through space at will.

The main character, Jack Havig, sets about to discover others of his kind. Much of the story is about what happens after he does.....

Amy says

Here's an inevitable but different take on the time travel story. It answers the question of where you would find other time travelers and what you would do when you found them. The place to find time travelers is apparently at Jesus' crucifixion. And what you do when you find them is to form a league of time travelers who can hopefully make the future a better place. Never have I seen any other time travel author touch on these ideas, but they do seem like obvious ideas.

This story was quite enjoyable and only took a couple of sittings to finish. The time travelers in this story have a genetic predisposition to time travel with their physical body instead of by using a time machine. Their period of time travel covers quite a large period of time from the crucifixion to ancient Rome to pre-Colombian America to 1970s America to the day of judgment and beyond. It covers themes of love and deception and also tries to answer the question of what the ultimate possibility could be for a time traveler.

I definitely think this time travel novel is a sadly overlooked one that should have become more famous than it did. Poul Anderson wrote several other novels with time travel themes that I'd like to delve into soon.

Michael says

I am catching up on some neglected grand masters of science fiction and am lucky that alignment with a group read in time travel novels led me to this story by Anderson published in 1972. Shamefully, I have only read "Tau Zero" among his 50-plus sci fi novels, and I have long missed out on a chance to score another 5 star read like that one was for me. Given the early edition is hard to find, it was propitious to find it included in an omnibus collection of three novels from 1996, "Three in Time". I agree with the fellow introducing this book in applying Anderson's own words in an essay on the hallmarks of the epic form to characterize qualities of "There Will Be Time":

Largeness—diversity—marvels—seriousness, possibly leavened by humor, a conviction that life is worth

living—attention turned outward to the surrounding world—the supposition that man can either bend fate, or can in his heart resist being bent by it—endurance, achievement—a narrative that keeps moving—bold use of language....

Jack Havig learns as a baby that he can move through time at will and quite soon to hide that ability. The first hint of his capabilities comes when as an infant his being seen as falling by his mother causes her to drop another him. The vignette of the dropping baby highlights the circular loop of causality possible in the universe of this book. You can contribute to causal events in a past time period if it doesn't make too much disparity with the reality one experiences down the line. That barrier is common to time travel tales. The system at play here runs a plot on the time traveler's ability to change the future from a given future point, a hopeful prospect that whetted my appetite in a way that mimics the wonder and adventure of older sci fi, creating an almost nostalgic feeling.

The story revives the classic approach to storytelling by revelations of a confidant and witness of the hero's development (e.g. Melville, Conrad, the Apostles, Wells). Havig confesses all to his childhood doctor, Robert Anderson, a perfect avatar for the reader. He grounds us by making sense of Havig's travels from his home time in the 60s, contemporary with the author's writing of the novel. His narrator with a similar surname shows fatherly love for the young man which grows as Jack tests his abilities and eventually comes round to trying to save the future.

Given the premise of this ability, how would you live your life? If you stay alert enough, time slipping could keep you safe against many treats. We get an early dawning of Jake's freakish ability to multiply himself for brief periods by short cycling in time, handy for a pre-teen faced with a pack of bullies on an urban street. But Jack avoids expressing such powers and looks for a quiet time in past periods where he can live comfortably as normal people. Slipping into the future is more disturbing and hard to read and fit into unusual cultures found there. Just a short period forward reveals an ecological and economic collapse over the horizon. But the escapes to the past are a lonely business. He can't resist puzzling out how he might find others of his kind, if they exist. Finding others of his kind a quite a satisfying part of the story.

The others Jake does find are part of a recruitment effort by a group gathered from different times into a staging point in a low tech future after the apocalypse. Their powerful leader, called the Sachem, has learned from cautious visits to various futures of even a few centuries that there is a coming phase of totalitarian domination combined with low impact high tech in a future of extremely depleted resources. Can they prepare to drop into some future and shape a more Edenic outcome for human civilization? From the ability to carry objects when time travelling they carry out raids on chaotic points in the past to collect gold and weapons. Jake develops his skills as a virtual lieutenant of their charismatic leader.

But abuse of power is an insidious temptation for the gifted as much as with regular time-bound people. And racist bias is hard to stamp out of the personalities of so many of the gang, raised in their centuries to judge societies conquered or dominated by dark-skinned peoples as an anathema of a defeated civilization. Jake's little heaven in a family he creates in Byzantium in the early 13th century falls into the path of a brutal raid by the group associated with a European Crusader sack of Constantinople. Jack has to go his own way and make his own force, one that can foil the Sachem's schemes.

All in all an exciting combination of engaging personal development, wonderful world-building across the sweep of time, and a compelling quest of great import that anyone can root for. No complaints to speak of. Granted our hero and his nemesis are a little sketchy, but readers can color him in with their own imaginations. The alternative to this book's hybrid solution to the paradoxes of changing one's timeline is a the use of a multiverse scenario, i.e. the timeline changes lead to either an alternate or a parallel reality of

your known present. Think "The Terminator." I think this book's approach to maintaining a single timeline and universe was equally fun.

Graeme Dunlop says

I can't tell you how much I love this book, nor count the number of times I've read it. It's one of those old favourites that is remembered every couple of years or so, and I go, "Oh yeah! THAT one! Time to read it again."

I don't think I've ever read an Anderson story I didn't like. Poul Anderson is an extremely accomplished writer and an extremely prolific one. He wrote a lot in the fantasy genre, but also a lot of time-travel books, and this is one of the best. I love it because it's short, it's exciting, it's thoughtful, and it's a complete story. It's about a guy, Jack Havig, who finds he can project himself through time with nothing but his own body -- it's an innate ability. The way he goes about exploring that and finding others like himself, and what he does when he finds them, makes for a compelling narrative that although written in the 70s still holds up today. Anderson cleverly avoided too much near-term prediction, whilst still speculating gently on what happens in the 21st century (and beyond).

And it resolves beautifully, with Havig discovering a higher purpose for the betterment of mankind.

Absolutely fantastic, in all senses of the word.

Cheryl says

Honestly, I don't have much to say. I read it for the Time Travel Group here, hoping for a good old classic 'What If' story of ideas, and I guess that's what I got. Characters, superficial. Heart & soul, absent. Plot, workmanlike. Ideas interesting, somewhere halfway in between Simak's pastoral and Heinlein's militaristic. Ultimately, forgettable. *imo* ... maybe I've read too many books to appreciate this sub-genre any more.

Suzanne says

I love time travel novels, and this was a good one. It reasoned out more than any other time travel book I've read the whys and hows of being a traveller, and at the same time had a compelling plot, set all over the world and over history. I wonder if this was read by the author of The Time Traveler's Wife, as there are a few minor similarities, especially in telling of the main character's early life. The ending is hopeful, and the writing has a great tone---thought-provoking and emotional-provoking without being overdone. I'm going to look for more Poul Anderson novels.

Jim says

Here's another book about a guy with a super-power (I seem to have read a lot of these). Jack Havig's power

is to be able to move through time, either to the future or the past. When he goes to the future, he discovers there's a new Dark Age coming, and humanity will fall back into barbarism. Anderson wrote the book in 1973 and I think he did not care for the dissent going on, the Watergate scandal, and so on. So his time traveller sees all this leading to a collapse by the 1990s. I for one am glad that didn't happen. But we are not "out of the woods" yet! What made the story interesting is that Jack searches for others of his kind and discovers there are other time travellers out there--and they are not necessarily good guys.
